

a sudden jar seems to injure the creatures. I find a tomahawk better than an axe. It is also an advantage to wedge the timber as it is split.

A few of the pupae reached the adult stage, but when the elytra commenced to form they stuck together on the edge of the abdomen and shrivelled up. These particular specimens had been placed in small jars in the observation case and it appeared that moisture forming in the jar may have damped the elytra, preventing their complete development. The successfully reared specimens had been placed in matchbox traps.

On January 30, 1951, I again cut open some more *Casuarina* trunks and obtained two very active female *Curis*. The tree had quite a number of larvae in it. They were a watery-white, with a black food streak showing down the abdomen. They were immature stages of the larvae I had obtained in the previous November and were only about one inch in length. I take it they were the next generation of *Curis*.

A single free individual of *Curis* was seen on January 30, on the leaves of a paperbark tree. This may well prove to be the food plant of the beetle. Unfortunately the insect was too quick for me and my net missed it by inches as it whirred away to freedom.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Red-winged Wren at Roleystone.—In view of reports of the apparent diminution of range of the Red-winged Wren (*Malurus elegans*) near Perth, I would like to record the observation of a male in full plumage at Roleystone on October 4, 1950. The bird was seen in tea tree thickets in a swamp situation besides a small creek running into the Canning River at Croydon Road, about 6 miles below the Canning dam.

—A. NOTLEY, Roleystone.

Quokka Feeding on Introduced Snail and Stinkwort.—Quokkas (*Setonix brachyurus*) at Rottnest Island have acquired a taste for many unusual things as may be seen by their foraging in the rubbish bins. In January 1950 I noticed two unexpected items in their diet. A group of these marsupials was being watched in broad daylight and at close quarters, so close that one Quokka accidentally nibbled my thumb while eating a lettuce leaf I held for it. It turned from my thumb without hopping away and then ate from a bush close by several white snails (*Helix pisana*), all with much relish and crackling. The next item of food was equally astonishing. They nibbled avidly at the dry stalks of stinkwort (*Inula graveolens* Desf.).

—(Mrs.) RICA ERICKSON, "Fairlea," Bolgart.

Red-tailed Tropic-bird at Albany.—Though the most southern known regular nesting place of the Red-tailed Tropic-bird (*Phaethon rubricauda*) is at the Abrolhos, some individuals have been known to wander south and east as far as South Australia. On March 19, 1951, I saw a bird from the F.R.V. *Warveen* off Albany, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off the south-west side of Breaksea Island. The day was calm with a

light breeze and a light swell, the bird approaching us from the south-west. It proceeded to the lee of Breaksea Island where it made several swoops down at the water close to the edge of the rocks. It then flew back out to sea, passing 200 yards ahead of the *Warreen*, the pink tail feathers being easily seen by several of the interested members of the crew.

—N. E. STEWART, Cottesloe.

Records of the Smoker Parrot.—On May 29, 1951, I observed a flock of about 15 Smoker Parrots (*Polytelis anthopeplus*) in a roadside eucalypt nearly a mile from Chidlow townsite. They remained quietly in the lower branches of the tree and permitted of close observation. Chidlow is well within the jarrah forest block, an area not usually frequented by this parrot.

—L. SEDGWICK, Wooroloo.

At the end of May while working on my holding I was surprised to see a flock of these birds settle in a blue gum tree. As far as I was able to count there were 20 or more of them. A colony of Magpies dispersed the parrots and upset the count.

—T. B. DELAPORTE, Maddington.

On August 14, on the Northam road, 4 miles west of the Wundowie turn-off, two Smokers were seen feeding on spilled wheat at the roadside in company with two Common Bronzewings. A little further on 4 Twenty-eight Parrots were feeding similarly.

—D. L. SERVENTY, Nedlands.

Food Transference by Pallid Cuckoos.—On August, 14, 1951, about 1630 hours, we encountered three or four Pallid Cuckoos (*Cuculus pallidus*) in part-cleared country by Wooroloo Brook. Two of these were kept under observation for perhaps 20 minutes. One bird flew down to the ground from an elevated perch calling "Peep-peep-peep" and proeured a long hairy caterpillar. It then flew to a blackboy (*Xanthorrhoea*) inflorescence about 50 yards away and elung sideways to the spike for a short time before flying to a dead tree and presenting the caterpillar to a bird which shortly afterwards uttered a harsh grating "Tweet." This bird was apparently the female of a pair.

The male then flew to some distance and, after a pause, again uttered the "Peep-peep-peep" call. The female flew to meet the male on a blackboy spike and was presented with a large hairy caterpillar. Flying to a dead tree, the female ate the caterpillar while the male flew off and resumed the "Peep-peep-peep" call after an interval.

When the male again flew towards the female, she descended a few feet in the tree to meet him and received a small striped hairy grub. The male then flew away and after a time resumed the "Peep-peep-peep" call. It flew, hovered, pounced on a caterpillar, and flying to a bush, still calling, ate the caterpillar.

We then lost sight of one of the birds and broke off observations.